



East Anstey Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113146
Local Authority Devon
Inspection number 289524
Inspection date 20 November 2006
Reporting inspector Lorna Brackstone

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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|---|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | East Anstey |
| School category | Community | | Tiverton |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 | | EX16 9JP |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01398 341369 |
| Number on roll (school) | 40 | Fax number | 01398 341369 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | D Mair |
| | | Headteacher | T Gurney |
| Date of previous school inspection | 16 September 2002 | | |

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| 4–11 | 20 November 2006 | 289524 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small rural school which has two mixed age classes. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is high. Children start school in either September or January when they are four and a half. The school roll is increasing because of a rise in the number of pupils who join the school in the middle of their primary education. Many of these pupils have learning difficulties, which results in the school having an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school provides a satisfactory quality of education and has several good features. Pupils' personal development is good and ensures that they develop well as confident young people. They very much enjoy school and behave well. Pupils' attendance is good. They like school because 'it is fun'. A pupil explained that there is always 'a warm welcome to anyone that wants to come and make friends'. Pupils love to join in all the good quality and interesting activities that are planned for them. One of several parents wrote, 'My children are very lucky to attend this school'. It enjoys a good reputation because it is a safe place where each pupil is well cared for.

Since the last inspection, the headteacher, who was newly in post, has taken a strong lead in improving the physical environment of the school and has systematically addressed the weaknesses in the quality of provision. Consequently, the school building is now fit for purpose. The good curriculum represents another key improvement in the school. There is an extremely high standard of extra-curricular activities on offer. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Since the appointment of new staff, there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching. Although relationships are strong and support staff are used well, teachers do not always mark pupils' work thoroughly enough. Consequently, mistakes or untidiness are not always picked up and pupils are not given sufficient information on how they can improve their work. This results in inconsistent progress through the school. The level of care, support and guidance is satisfactory. Pastoral care is good because teaching staff know their pupils very well. There are weaknesses in the academic guidance given to pupils. Recently-introduced procedures are not being used sufficiently well to provide pupils with the support and guidance they need to achieve higher standards. This means that pupils are not fully familiar with the standards of their own work and do not fully grasp what they need to do to improve.

The standards pupils reach are average and this represents satisfactory achievement. However, the level of achievement in mathematics is not as high as it should be, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The quality of provision and standards in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Not all children benefit from a full year in Reception but most reach the expected levels and achievement is sound. The curriculum is planned to meet their needs, and additional support is provided specifically for these young children.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is well supported by his staff team and governing body. The school's capacity to improve is based upon the secure educational direction of the headteacher who has ensured that pupil behaviour is better and there is a more positive attitude towards learning. Improved resourcing and an up-to-date and relevant school improvement plan have also contributed to a well-organised school. One parent echoed the views of several by explaining that the school is fortunate to have 'such a positive, efficient and effective headteacher'.

What the school should do to improve further

- improve the quality of marking so that teachers have higher expectations of work and set more challenging targets for each pupil
- involve the pupils more closely in understanding the levels they could attain and what they need to do to get there
- improve the progress made in mathematics, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupil achievement is satisfactory, and standards are close to the national average, except for mathematics which is below average. The small number of pupils in each year means that their standards when they join the school vary from year to year. However, generally, they are typical of their age and they make satisfactory progress achieving the expected levels by the start of Year 1. In recent years, the standards pupils have attained have slightly declined because the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties has increased. The school is fully aware that the pupils' mathematical achievement in Years 3 to 6 is not as consistent as it could be and have reorganised teaching to reflect better the needs of the vast age and ability ranges within each class. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good personal development and well-being are at the heart of the school's good reputation. Pupils care for others, behave well and enjoy this 'lovely little school'. Pupils find their work interesting and particularly like the way that the school links different subjects together. This was noticeable in the Infant Class where some pupils, as a response to a story, were writing their own tale about pirates while others created treasure maps. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are successfully encouraged to think carefully about themselves, to play an active part in their school community and within the wider world. This is illustrated well through their link with a school in Sri Lanka and in their understanding of the dedication of the adventure playground to the memory of a much loved and respected member of the school community. Generally, the pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their lives. This is because they know how to keep healthy and safe, and are actively encouraged to be involved in making decisions. The termly 'Anstey Journal' is a good example of how pupils' interests and ideas are shared within the community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory but is improving as the new staff, who are keen to improve standards, become familiar with whole-school systems. Throughout the school, relationships in lessons are friendly and positive so pupils are keen to learn. Teachers organise their classrooms and resources effectively, mostly taking account of the wide range of ages they are teaching. Learning support assistants are used well to help cater for different age groups and support those pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils' behaviour is managed well so there are few problems. However, there is inconsistency in progress because marking does not always provide sufficient help for the pupils to understand how they can achieve higher standards.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and ensures that pupil progress can now move at a faster rate. It is now planned carefully so that pupils develop skills progressively and this helps them to be well prepared for future learning. The school also makes good links between subjects so that pupils have a chance to apply their skills in different situations. For example, following a trip to the science museum in Bristol, pupils in Years 3 to 6 were using their designing and writing skills to create an information leaflet. A very good range of trips and visits enlivens the work in classrooms. Inspection findings agree with pupils and parents alike who feel that 'the after-school club provision is excellent, with a wide range of activities for the children throughout the year including sport, crafts and music'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils work in safe surroundings and good child protection procedures are in place. The pastoral care is strong and relationships are open and supportive. 'Bubble time' is a good opportunity for pupils to talk to an adult about a problem and this helps them feel secure that any concerns they might have will be sorted out. Pupils with learning difficulties are quickly identified and supported well through individual programmes. Although all pupils are set targets, these are not specific enough. This means that they do not have a clear enough understanding of what levels they are expected to reach and what they will need to do to achieve them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The strong and determined leadership of the headteacher has been a key factor in improving the accommodation and overcoming staffing difficulties, and there is still further capacity to improve. The headteacher has been working hard to develop rigorous and very detailed monitoring systems. These have just started to enable staff to see how each pupil in their class is progressing regardless of age or ability. However, these systems are at an early stage of implementation and it is too soon to see their impact on standards.

Governors are well informed and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are starting to become more involved with school improvement. Self-evaluation forms a good basis for planning but is over-generous in those aspects where the outcomes of systems have yet to show impact. Consultation and communication with parents are good. This is demonstrated with the introduction of new 'open afternoons' and the chance to talk to the headteacher directly, using a 'weekly hotline'. The school works well with outside agencies and organisations to improve pupils' learning.

Inspection judgements

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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|-----------------------|

Overall effectiveness

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 3 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 3 |

Personal development and well-being

| | |
|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

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|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 3 |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 3 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 3 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 3 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for making me so welcome at your school. I really enjoyed meeting you all and am grateful for the way in which you helped me do my job. A special thanks to the group of pupils I met who spoke so honestly and clearly about life at East Anstey.

I think your school provides you with a sound education that is getting better everyday. You feel safe and cared for because the school looks after you well and supports you satisfactorily in your education. You make steady progress and reach average standards by Year 6. This helps to prepare you for the next stage of your education. You behave well and enjoy your learning because it is made fun and interesting through the good curriculum. Teaching is satisfactory, and your teachers are rapidly making it good. The adults in charge of the school are doing this in a satisfactory way. Your headteacher is determined to speed up the progress you make and has devised good systems which will help your teachers achieve this and give you the very best education.

To help you become an even better school, I have asked your teachers to:

- mark your books in much more detail so that you know what to do to improve your work
- discuss with you the levels you could achieve and agree with you about how to get there
- help you to improve your mathematical skills.

As you can see, you have your part to play. I wish you lots of luck for the future.